

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to make editorial changes therein, bearing in mind the criticisms in the Official Action, and an abstract has been added on a separate sheet to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Art was not applied against claim 11. Even though claim 11 has been canceled by the present amendment, clarification of the allowability of the subject matter of claim 11 is requested in the next Official Action.

Claims 1-11 were rejected under §112, second paragraph. These claims have been replaced with new claims that are believed to be proper as to form. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8 were rejected as anticipated by ULMITZ 3,022,928 and claims 3, 7, and 9-10 were rejected as unpatentable over ULMITZ. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The new claims are directed to a tensioner assembly that includes a selectable number of conveyors that are connectable together in plural different connection arrangements by connection elements. Each of the conveyors includes clamping members carried by an endless chain and a base frame that adjustably carries the endless chain. Each of the conveyors includes attachment points in the base frame. Each of the

connection elements includes connectors at ends thereof for connection to respective ones of the attachment points to create the plural different connection arrangements with a selectable number of conveyors. That is, the invention defined in claim 12 is a kit that may be assembled into tensioners with different numbers of conveyors, as needed for a particular application. The advantages of this arrangement at sea are apparent. A tensioner may be assembled with as many conveyors as needed, and then changed by removing or adding conveyors when the nature of the body being conveyed by the tensioner demands.

ULMITZ does not disclose or suggest such an assembly and thus the new claims avoid the rejections of record. ULMITZ discloses a device with exactly three conveyors and there is no suggestion to change this number or to make the device capable of changing this number. The reference does not disclose the claimed attachment points in the base frame or the connection elements with connectors at ends thereof for connection to respective ones of the attachment points to create the plural different connection arrangements.

The Official Action indicates that attachment points are known. However, there is nothing of record to motivate the artisan to provide attachment points in the conveyor base frame and to connect them together in plural different connection arrangements using connection elements that are attached to the attachment points.

The reference is silent about the flexibility afforded by the base frames with attachment points and the connection elements and thus one of skill in the art would not be motivated to provide an assembly that offers plural different connections wherein a tensioner made from the assembly includes a selectable number of the conveyors.

Accordingly, the new claims avoid the art of record.

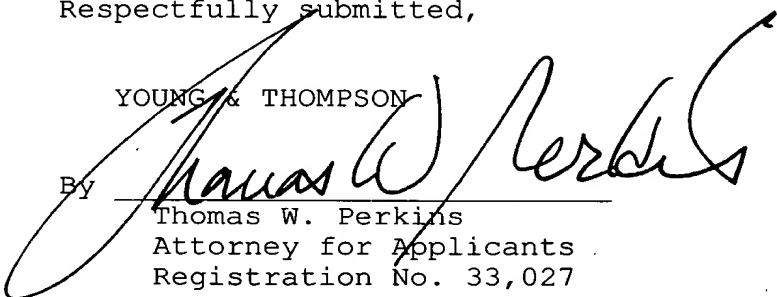
The dependent claims also avoid the art of record. For example, ULMITZ does not disclose connection elements that are rods with a common length as in claim 13, the independent adjustability of the position of the endless chain as in claim 14, the hydraulic cylinders in claim 15, or the four conveyors in claims 17-19.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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